

## Message Text

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PAGE 01 VIENTI 02675 01 OF 03 031119Z

11

ACTION EA-14

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 NEA-10 IO-14 ISO-00 SS-20 PM-07 NSC-07

L-03 CIAE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00 RSC-01 PA-04 PRS-01 AID-20

OMB-01 SSO-00 INRE-00 NSCE-00 DRC-01 SP-03 /142 W

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O R 030943Z APR 74

FM AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 8368

INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

AMEMBASSY CANBERRA

AMEMBASSY JAKARTA

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MANILA

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

AMEMBASSY OTTAWA

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY PHNOM PENH

AUEN/AMEMBASSY RANGOON (POUCH)

AMEMBASSY SAIGON

AMEMBASSY TAIPEI

AMEMBASSY TOKYO

AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON

AMCONSUL HONG KONG

AMCONSUL UDORN

USLO PEKING

USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

SECDEF

USIA WASHDC

DIA

CINCPAC

CINCUSARPAC

CINCPACAF

CDR USSAG NKP

CDR 13 AF ADVON UDORN

USDAO SAIGON

COMUSMACTHAI

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PAGE 02 VIENTI 02675 01 OF 03 031119Z

DODSPECREP BANKGOK

DODSPECREP NKP  
354 TFW KORAT  
CHSPECACTS BANGKOK  
CDR JCRC NKP  
7 ACCS KORAT  
432 TFW UDORN  
8 TFW UBON  
56 SOW NKP  
388 TFW KORAT

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 3 VIENTIANE 2675

CINCPAC ALSO FOR POLAD; 13 AF ADVON, 432 TFW, 56 SOW,  
388 TFW, 354 TFW AND 8 TFW FOR DO/DI; MACTHAI FOR J-2  
AND PAO

E.O. 11652: GDS  
TAGS: MOPS, PGOV, PFOR, PINT, ECON, LA  
SUBJECT: LAO WEEKLY SITREP - APRIL 3

REF: VIENTIANE 2469

BEGIN SUMMARY: AFTER 11 YEARS SENCE, PRINCE SOUPHANOUVONG  
RETURNED TO VIENTIANE APRIL 3 AND IS SCHEDULED TO FLY TO  
LUANG PRABANG TOMORROW WITH PRIME MINISTER FOR ROYAL INVESTI-  
TURE OF NEW COALITION GOVERNMENT AND JNPC ON APRIL 5. PUBLI-  
CATION OF OFFICIAL LIST OF NEW MINISTERS AND SECRETARIES OF  
STATE OR MEMBERS OF JNPC WILL PROBABLY BE DEFERRED UNTIL  
APRIL 5; BUT, ON RLG SIDE, IT APPEARS THAT KEY INDIVIDUALS  
WILL REMAIN IN CABINET AND THAT, FOR BOTH SIDES, CABINET  
WILL REFLECT REMARKABLE STABILITY OF LAO RULING ELITE.  
DURING WEEK, RLG AND LPF FORMALLY COMPLETED "NEUTRALI-  
ZATION" OF VIENTIANE AND LUANG PRABANG. LPF RECEIVED

VISITS IN SAM NEUA FROM A GDR DELEGATION, POLISH AND  
CZECH DIPLOMATS, AND APPROVED NOMINATION OF GRUNK/FUNK  
REPRESENTATIVE. AT REQUEST OF POLISH DELEGATE, AN ICC  
MEETING CALLED FOR APRIL 2--TO CONSIDER CANADIAN REQUEST  
FOR ADJOURNMENT AND JCCIA REQUEST FOR REACTIVATION--HAS  
BEEN POSPONED UNTIL MID-APRIL. ONLY ONE MINOR MILITARY  
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PAGE 03 VIENTI 02675 01 OF 03 031119Z

INCIDENT REPORTED. IN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENTS, EXCHANGE  
DEMAND WAS MHQERATE, AND RLG ANNOUNCED SMALL WAGE INCREASE  
FOR ITS EMPLOYEES. END SUMMARY

I. IMPLEMENTING LAO ACCORDS

1. FORMING THE NEW GOVERNMENT  
THE NEW COALITION GOVERNMENT (PGNU) IS SCHEDULED

TO BE FORMED APRIL 5. PRINCE SOUPHANOUVONG, CHAIRMAN OF LPF CENTRAL COMMITTEE, ARRIVED IN VIENTIANE FROM HANOI JUST BEFORE NOON, APRIL 3. HE WAS ACCOMPANIED BY A SMALL PARTY--INPFUDING TIAO SOUK VONGSAK AND SENIOR COMMUNIST PARTY PROPAGANDIST SANAN SOUTICHAK.

THEY WERE MET BY PRIME MINISTER AND MOST CHIEFS OF DIPLOMATIC MISSIONS IN VIENTIANE, INCLUDING THE U.S. BUT NOT SOUTH VIETNAM. (THE LPF HAD SENT LETTERS INFORMING MISSIONS OF THE TIME OF ARRIVAL.) ONLY SOUVANNA, PHENG PHONGSAVAN AND SOUKAN ATTENDED FROM CABINET. NO FAR GENERALS WERE PRESENT. SOUVANNA AND SOUPHANOUVONG GRZNTED EACH OTHER CORDIALLY, AFTER THE LATTER'S ABSENCE OF 11 YEARS FROM VIENTIANE. A LARGE AND EXUBERANT CROWD, INCLUDING MANY STUDENTS, ALSO GREETED SOUPHANOUVONG WITH CHEERS AND APPLAUSE AS HE STEPPED FROM THE LPF'S AN-24B. IN HIS BRIEF PREPARED STATEMENT, SOUPHANOUVONG STATED THAT HE HAD COME TO WORK WITH SOUVANNA TO FORM THE NEW PGNU AND JOINT NATIONAL POLITICAL COUNCIL (JNPC) AS ORGANS OF SUPREME POWER IN THE KINGDOM. HE NOTED THAT JCCIA HAD PRODUCED SOME POSITIVE RESULTS IN IMPLEMENTING THE AGREEMENT AND PROTOCOL AND CREATING NECESSARY CONDITIONS FOR INSTALLING THE NEW PGNU AND JNPC; BUT HE CAUTIONED ON BASIS OF EXPERIENCE THAT OBSTACLES MAY YET REMAIN IN THE SEARCH FOR PEACE AND NATIONAL RECONCILIATION. SPEECH WAS QUITE SELF-SERVING AND SOUPHANOUVONG, BOUNCY, VIGOROUS AND GENIAL, DOMINATED THE EVENT. SECURITY ARRANGEMENTS BROKE DOWN UNDER ENTHUSIASM OF CROWD AND NEWSMEN.

THE PRIME MINISTER WILL HOST A DINNER FOR SOUPHANOUVONG THIS EVENING (APRIL 3) AND THEN WILL FLY WITH HIM TO LUANG PRABANG APRIL 4. OTHER LPF CABINET MINISTERS AND MEMBERS OF THE JNPC WILL PROCEED TO LUANG PRABANG DIRECT FROM HANOI. INVESTITURE OF THE CABINET  
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PAGE 04 VIENTI 02675 01 OF 03 031119Z

AND JNPC BY ROYAL DECREE IS EXPECTED TO TAKEHDLACE APRIL 4 OR, MORE LIKELY, 5--DEPENDING ON THE KING. THEREAFTER, THE NEW CABINET WILL RETURN TO VIENTIANE FOR RELIGIOUS RITES, SCHEDULED APRIL 6, AND FOR RECEPTION SOUVANNA IS PLANNING FOR APRIL 7. INDIVIDUAL MINISTERS WILL ASSUME THEIR POSTS IN SEPARATE CEREMONIES NEXT WEEK. PHOUMI VONGVICHIT STATED PRIVATELY THAT JNPC WILL SIT IN LUANG PRABANG. THE NEW GOVERNMENT WILL THEREFORE BE IN PLACE BEFORE THE LAO NEW YEAR CEREMONIES BEGIN IN LUANG PRABANG ON APRIL 13.

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PAGE 01 VIENTI 02675 02 OF 03 031133Z

15

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 3 VIENTIANE 2675

THE FOREGOING DEVELOPMENTS THE ARRIVAL OF LPF PLENIPOTENTIARY PHOUMI VONGVICHIT IN VIENTIANE ON MARCH 27. BEGINNING MARCH 28, PHOUMI MET DAILY WITH SOUVANNA AND, AFTER EACH SESSION, MADE PROGRESSIVELY MORE OPTIMISTIC REMARKS WHICH CULMINATED APRIL 2 WITH THE STATEMENT THAT THE LAO SIDES HAD "REACHED COMPLETE AGREEMENT ON THE FORMATION OF A COALITION GOVERNMENT." SOUVANNA AND PHOUMI REPORTEDLY DRAFTED THE ROYAL ORDINANCES WHICH THE KING WILL SIGN TO INVEST THE NEW PGNU AND JNPC.

## 2. COMPOSITION OF NEW CABINET

NO OFFICIAL LIST OF NEW MINISTERS AND SECRETARIES OF STATE OR MEMBERS OF THE NJPC HAS YET APPEARED, AND PUBLICATION OF SUCH A LISTING WILL NO DOUBT BE DEFERRED UNTIL SOUVANNA AND SOUPHANOUVONG HAVE FORMALLY TRANSMITTED IT TO THE KING. SOUVANNA, HOWEVER, CONVENED A COUNCIL OF MINISTERS MEETING APRIL 1 TO APPROVE THE RLG'S NEW CABINET LIST, AS WELL AS THE DRAFTS OF THE ROYAL ORDINANCES. OFFICIAL LAO PRESSE REPORTED THAT THE GOVERNMENT'S 16 DESIGNEES FOR THE JNPC HAD ALSO BEEN CHOSEN; AND NCNA, APRIL 2, BROADCAST THAT RLG AND LPF HAVE AGREED ON NAME LISTS FOR PARTICIPANTS IN BOTH PGNU AND JNPC.

ON THE RLG SIDE, IT APPEARS THAT SISOUK WILL REMAIN DEFENSE MINISTER, GIVING OVER FINANCE TO NGON SANANKONE; PHENG PHONGSAVAN WILL REMAIN INTERIOR MINISTER; KHAMPHAI ABHAY WILL BE HEALTH MINISTER; LEUAM INSISIENGMAI REMAINS DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER AND EDUCATION MINISTER. IF

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PAGE 03 VIENTI 02675 02 OF 03 031133Z

LISTS WE HAVE SEEN SO FAR ARE CORRECT, ONLY TWO MEMBERS OF PRESENT GOVERNMENT (SISOUMANG AND SOUK UPRAVAN) ARE TO BE DROPPED; AND ONLY FOUR NEW FACES FROM RLG SIDE WILL SERVE AS SECRETARIES OF STATE. ON BOTH SIDES, NEW CABINET DISPLAYS REMARKABLE STABILITY OF LAO RULING ELITE OVER MORE THAN A DECADE.

### 3. JCCIA DEVELOPMENTS

THE "COMPLETE NEUTRALIZATION" OF VIENTIANE TOOK EFFECT OFFICIALLY MARCH 27, WHEN, IN CEREMONIES AT THE 18TH MEETING OF THE JCCIA, THE MILITARY COMMANDER OF THE PLACE DE VIENTIANE (VIENTIANE MILITARY DISTRICT) TRANSFERRED HIS POWERS AND AUTHORITY TO THE JOINT POLICE FORCES (JPF) AND PROTECTIVE MILITARY FORCES (PMF). THE JPF NOW HAVE THE RESPONSIBILITY FOR ALL POLICE AND SECURITY FUNCTIONS WITHIN THE CITY, WHILE THE PMF HAVE BACKUP RESPONSIBILITIES FOR NEUTRALIZATION IN A ZONE EXTENDING 15 KILOMETERS OUT FROM THE CITY LIMITS. IN LUANG PRABANG, SIMILAR CEREMONIES, TRANSFERRING RESPONSIBILITIES OF MILITARY FORCES AND METROPOLITAN POLICE TO THE PMF AND JPF, WERE HELD ON MARCH 26.

OTHER QUESTIONS DISCUSSED IN THE 18TH JCCIA SESSION INCLUDED THE CONTINUED PRESENCE OF RLAF'S T-28S AT THE AIRPORTS IN VIENTIANE AND LUANG PRABANG AND PROBLEMS CONCERNING THE LIVING QUARTERS OF THE LPF SIDE IN THE TWO CITIES.

### 4. LPF ACTIVITIES

A) NEW LPF AIRPLANE - THE AN-24B WHICH BROUGHT PRINCE SOUPHANOUVONG AND PARTY TO VIENTIANE TODAY MADE A TEST FLIGHT TO VIENTIANE AND LUANG PRABANG ON MARCH 28. THE PLANE, PROVIDED BY THE USSR, HAD SIX NORTH VIETNAMESE CREW MEMBERS AND SIX LAO STEWARDESSES. IT HAS BEEN PAINTED WITH LPF INSIGNIA AND INITIALS STANDING FOR "AVIATION NEO LAO." ACCORDING TO LPF SPOKESMAN, THE PLANE WILL BE USED FOR RESUPPLY AND THE TRANSFER OF PERSONNEL TO LUANG PRABANG AND VIENTIANE.

B) VISITS TO SAM NEUA - A DELEGATION OF THE SOCIALIST UNITY PARTY OF THE GDR, HEADED BY PARTY CENTRAL CONFIDENTIAL

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PAGE 04 VIENTI 02675 02 OF 03 031133Z

COMMITTEE MEMBER JOHANNES CHAMNITZER, PAID A SIX-DAY, FRIENDSHIP VISIT TO THE LAO "LIBERATED ZONE" MARCH 23-29. THE DELEGATION MET WITH LPF CHAIRMAN PRINCE SOUPHANOUVONG AND TRAVELED IN THE VICINITY OF SAM NEUA. AT THE WELCOMING GRAND BANQUET, CHAMNITZER, AFTER HEARING AN LPF SPEAKER EXPRESS APPRECIATION FOR PAST MATERIAL ASSISTANCE AND SUPPORT OF THE GDR, PLEDGED THAT THE "SED/GDR WOULD SPARE NO EFFORTS TO SUPPORT THE LAO PEOPLE IN POST-WAR RECONSTRUCTION OF THE LIBERATED ZONE." THE PARTING COMMUNIQUE DID NOT, HOWEVER, REITERATE THIS PLEDGE. ALSO VISITING SAM NEUA DURING THE WEEK WERE THE POLISH AMBASSADOR TO LAOS DOMAGALA (WHO IS RESIDENT IN HANOI) AND THE CZECH CHARGE IN VIENTIANE JOZEF LANCARIC. BOTH DIPLOMATS

ARRIVED IN SAM NEUA MARCH 29.

C) GRUNK/FUNK REPRESENTATION - FBIS APRIL 2  
CARRIED GRUNK "MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS" COMMUNIQUE  
ANNOUNCING THAT SOUPHANOUVONG HAS APPROVED THE NOMINATION  
OF SIEN AN AS "REPRESENTATIVE EXTRAORDINARY AND PLENI-  
POTENTIARY OF THE GRUNK/FUNK TO THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE OF  
THE LPF." LPF HAVE ALREADY ANNOUNCED APPOINTMENT OF  
KHAMPHAY BOUPHA, HEAD OF THEIR REPRESENTATION IN HANOI,  
AS THEIR REPRESENTATIVE TO GRUNK/FUNK.

#### 4. LAO/DRV DIPLOMACY

DRV AMBASSADOR LE VAN HIEN CONTINUED TO MAKE CALLS  
ON HIS COLLEAGUE, INCLUDING THIS WEEK THE BRITISH,  
JAPANESE AND INDIANS. GOVERNMENT SPOKESMAN OUDAY, IN  
PRESS CONFERENCE MARCH 28, STATED THAT WITH HIEN'S RETURN  
THE RLG WOULD BE SENDING AN AMBASSADOR TO HANOI, BUT THAT  
THE APPOINTMENT WOULD BE MADE BY THE NEW GOVERNMENT.

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PAGE 01 VIENTI 02675 03 OF 03 031157Z

41

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PAGE 02 VIENTI 02675 03 OF 03 031157Z

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 3 OF 3 VIENTIANE 2675

## II. ICC DEVELOPMENTS

A FORMAL ICC MEETING - CALLED FOR APRIL 2 TO CONSIDER THE CANADIAN REQUEST FOR ADJOURNMENT AND THE JCCIA REQUEST FOR REACTIVATION-HAS BEEN POSTPONED AT THE REQUEST OF THE ACTING POLISH COMMISSIONER, WHO HAS BEEN INSTRUCTED NOT TO ATTEND ANY ICC MEETINGS UNTIL A PERMANENT COMMISSIONER ARRIVES IN MID-APRIL. PRIME MINISTER HAS PRIVATELY STATED THAT HE CANNOT UNDERSTAND THE CANADIAN MOVE TO ADJOURN OR WITHDRAW FROM ICC AT THIS "PARTICULAR MOMENT IN LAO HISTORY." SOUVANNA ADDED THAT, WHILE IT WOULD BE INAPPROPRIATE FOR HIM TO CRITICIZE THE POSITION, IT WAS MOST DISAPPOINTING TO HAVE THE CANADIANS LEAVE JUST WHEN THE ICC MIGHT BE ABLE TO MAKE A REAL CONTRIBUTION. IN CONVERSATION WITH THE UK AMBASSADOR APRIL 2, LPF PLENI-POTENTIARY PHOUMI "DEPLORED" THE CANADIAN INTENTIONS TO "WITHDRAW." PHOUMI REMARKED, HOWEVER, THAT ICC WOULD HAVE



LITTLE ROLE TO PERFORM WITH RESPECT TO POW/MIAS, SINCE THIS WAS MATTER WITHIN THE COMPETENCE OF THE LAO PARTIES.

### III. SECURITY SITUATION

THE SINGLE INCIDENT REPORTED IN THE WEEK OCCURRED WHEN A U.S. CONTRACTOR AIRCRAFT RECEIVED SMALL-ARMS FIRE IN MR-II, SUSTAINING SLIGHT DAMAGE. RADIO PATHET LAO CONTINUES ITS CHARGES AGAINST U.S. AERIAL RECONNAISSANCE ACTIVITIES, CLAIMING 126 SORTIES IN MR-III ALONE.

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PAGE 03 VIENTI 02675 03 OF 03 031157Z

### IV. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENTS

1. A FOUR-MAN ADB TEAM ARRIVED TO ASSIST LAO ELECTRIC (EDL) NEGOTIATE THE NAM NGUM PHASE II ENGINEERING CONSULTANTS CONTRACT WITH THE SWISS ENGINEERING FIRM.

2. TOTAL FOREIGN EXCHANGE DEMAND DURING PAST WEEK WAS MODERATE, WELL BELOW 1973 AVERAGE AND DOWN SHARPLY FROM PREVIOUS WEEK.

3. ON MARCH 28, THE VALUATION RATE FOR NEARLY ALL CWPORTS MOVED FROM 600 TO 840 KIP/DOLLAR. RETAIL PRICES ARE EXPECTED TO INCREASE AS NEW IMPORTS ASSESSED AT THE INCREASED RATE GO ON SALE.

4. THE RLG ANNOUNCED A SMALL SALARY INCREASE EFFECTIVE APRIL 1 FOR ALL CIVIL GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES AND FOR THE MILITARY. BASE PAY AT ABOUT HALF OF TOTAL COMPENSATION) WILL RISE UP TO 12 PERCENT FOR DIFFERENT CATEGORIES. FINAL DETAILS HAVE NOT YET BEEN WORKED OUT.

5. AN AUSTRALIAN TRADE MISSION ARRIVED TO DISCUSS EXPANDING TRADE WITH LAOS.  
WHITEHOUSE

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## Message Attributes

**Automatic Decaptioning:** X  
**Capture Date:** 01 JAN 1994  
**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Concepts:** COALITION GOVERNMENT, ECONOMIC CONDITIONS, WAGES, CABINET, FOREIGN RELATIONS, PERSONNEL ASSIGNMENTS, REPRESENTATION AT CEREMONIES  
**Control Number:** n/a  
**Copy:** SINGLE  
**Draft Date:** 03 APR 1974  
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**Decaption Note:**  
**Disposition Action:** RELEASED  
**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
**Disposition Authority:** garlanwa  
**Disposition Case Number:** n/a  
**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Date:** 28 MAY 2004  
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**Disposition Reason:**  
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**Locator:** TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM  
**Office:** ACTION EA  
**Original Classification:** CONFIDENTIAL  
**Original Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Original Previous Classification:** n/a  
**Original Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
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**Review Authority:** garlanwa  
**Review Comment:** n/a  
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